

Non-violent protest classes start

Group organizing for Nevada protest

By Christopher Blair
Emerald Reporter

People interested in learning the fine art of non-violent demonstration now have their chance - just in time for the annual demonstrations at the Nevada nuclear test site.

Members of American Peace Test are joining the Native American Shoshone Nation in protesting the Department of Energy's underground nuclear tests at the Mercury test site, about 65 miles north of Las Vegas from April 7-16.

Local APT members will be holding free non-violence training sessions for community members who want to attend the demonstrations. Training begins with discussions with and questions to participants, with teachers asking "students" what their concepts of non-violence are, said Vip Short, an APT non-violence teacher.

"There is a wide range of what people mean when you say 'non-violence,'" said Short. "Some people think it's violent when you eat a hamburger. Some say it's not violent until someone is attacked. We've got all these beliefs to work with."

After finding out where people stand, participants are taught about non-violence through the ages.

"The fate of a past people, history or tribe has always been linked to winning battles or violent victories," Short said. "Some people don't realize that some of our greatest strides have been made non-violently."

The training continues with discussion and role-playing, where participants are asked to alternate playing protesters and either police or test site personnel.

"You find yourself saying things like, 'I've got a family to support, why don't you hippy bums go home'" he said. "One of the things we try to do is to keep the peace people from trading insults and getting polarized. That's not what non-violence is about."

One of the final phases of the

training includes organizing the protesters, which involves the coordination of large groups of people, often with the use of maps.

"It has to do with moving people around and being disciplined," Short said, comparing the training to something that would be found at a military school. "The difference is that

rested protesters by phone as to their condition and whereabouts, Gold said.

Protestors will be told how to prepare for living in the desert, including bringing a tent and camping supplies, Gold said, adding there are plenty of places to camp in the Nevada desert.

Food will be provided to

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-Vip Short

people are going to be at the test site because they want to be there, and they're not made to carry guns either."

An important aspect of the training will be teaching protesters what to do if they are arrested.

"We have people go through the scope of what the possibilities are," said Richard Gold of APT. "It's possible that you will be arrested if you blockade the road to the test site. In the past they've given sentences as long as six months."

However, because of the large numbers of participants involved the past few years (10-12,000 are expected this year) police usually take prisoners to a facility 120 miles north of the site as "an inconvenience" and release them, Gold said.

The first sessions will be held March 20 and 21, from 6-10 p.m. at Room 1 of the First United Methodist Church, 1376 Olive St. A place to hold other sessions, scheduled for April 1 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and from April 3-4 from 6-10 p.m., has not yet been decided upon, said teacher Nancy Hale, adding that when a place is found, it will be near campus.

A March 25 session, to be held from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Methodist Church, is possible if a enough people express interest.

Most participants in the workshops will go to test sites, with others filling "support roles," such as notifying the professors and families of ar-

demonstrators for \$1 a day by Seeds of Peace, a non-profit group that caters to protests and peace events.

In the past, participants have had to pay \$50-70 for transportation to the test site protest, but Gold said there have been efforts to raise funds to make transportation a community event.

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Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. Box 3159, Eugene, Oregon 97403

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The Emerald is operated independently of the University with offices on the third floor of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

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